Articles of Home Interest Are Found Daily on This Page

Magazine Page

For a Chilly Day.

A PUDDING for a cold day is made from maize meal. Pour one and a half pints of scalded milk on a third of a cupful of meal, and cook in a double saucepan twenty minutes. Then add half a cupful of molasses, one teaspoonful of salt and one of sugar. Turn the whole into a greased basin, mix thoroughly and bake for two hours.

This Day in Our History.

THIS is the anniversary of the end of a ten-year period in 1825 during which the State of New York paid out more than $90,000 in bounties for the extermination of wolves. A wolf nowadays in the Empire State is a rarity even in the thickly wooded mountain sections.

The Club-Footed Man

A NEW SPY SERIAL BY VALENTINE WILLIAMS

Clubfoot Penetrates Desmond's Disguise and Attacks Him, But Later Makes His Escape.

(Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.)

Desmond Okewood, British army officer, goes to Germany in search of his brother, Francis, a member of the British secret service. At a small frontier town a man named Semlin, a German Government agent, drops dead in his room. Desmond appropriates Semlin's papers and assumes his identity. He reaches Berlin without incident and is conducted into the presence of General Von Boden, an aide of the Kaiser.

Desmond, having convinced Von Boden he is really Semlin, is ushered into the residence of the Kaiser. Later he receives a cipher message from his brother, Francis.

Desmond meets Clubfoot, who explains what he wants of Semlin.

The man's suavity had all but vanished: his voice was harsh and stern. His eyes glittered under his shaggy brows as he looked at me. Had I been less agitated, I should have noted this, as a portent of the coming storm, also his great ape's hands picking nervously at the telegram in his lap.

"I have already told you," I said firmly, "that I don't want your money. You know my terms!"

He rose up from his seat and his figure seemed to tower.

"Terms!" he cried in a voice that quivered with suppressed passion, "terms? Understand that I give orders. I accept terms from no man. We waste time here talking. Come, take the money and give me the paper."

I shook my head. My brain was clear, but I felt the crisis was coming. I took a good grip with my hands of the marble slab covering the radiator behind me to give me confidence. The slab yielded: I noted that it was loose.

The man in front of me was shaking with rage.

"Listen!" he said. "I'll give you one more chance. But mark my words well. Do you know what happened to the man who stole that document? The English took him out and shot him on account of what was found in his house when they raided it. Do you know what happened to the interpreter at the internment camp, who was our go-between, who played us false by cutting the document in half? The English shot him, too, on account of what was found in letters that came to him openly through the post? And who settled Schulte? And who settled the other man? Who contrived the traps that sent them to their doom? It was I, Grundt, I, the cripple, I, the Clubfoot, that had these traitors dispatched as an example to the six thousand of us who serve our Emperor and empire in darkness! You dog, I'll smash you!"

He was gibbering like an angry ape; his frame was shaking with fury; every hair in the tangle on his face and hands seemed to bristle with his Berserker frenzy.

But he kept away from me, and I saw that he was still fighting to preserve his self-control.

I maintained a bold front.

"This may do for your own people," I said, contemptuously, "but it doesn't impress me. I'm an American citizen!"

He was calmer now, but his eyes glittered dangerously.

"An American citizen!" he said in an icy tone. Then he fairly hissed at me:

"You fool! Blind, besotted fool! Do you think you can trifle with the might of the German empire? Ah! I've played a pretty game with you, you dirty English dog! I've watched you squirming and writhing whilst the stupid German told you his pretty little tale and plied you with his wine and his cigars. You're in our power now, you miserable English hound! Do you understand that? Now call on your fleet to come and save you!

"Listen! I'll be frank with you to the last. I've had my suspicions of you from the first, when they telephoned me that you had escaped from the hotel, but I wanted to make sure. Ever since you have been in this room it has been in my power to push that bell there and send you to Spandau, where they rid us of such dirty dogs as you.

"But the game amused me. I liked to see the Herr Englander playing the spy against me, the master of them all. Do you know, you fool, that old Schratt knows English, that she spent years of her harlot's life in London, and that when you allowed her a glimpse of that passport, your own passport, the one you so cleverly burned, she remembered the name? Ah, you didn't know that, did you?

"Shall I tell you what was in that telegram they just brought me? It was from Schratt, our faithful Schratt, who shall have a bangle for this night's work, to say that the corpse at the hotel has a chain round its neck with an identity disc in the name of Semlin. Ha! you didn't know that either, did you?

"And you would bargain and chaffer with me! You would dictate your terms, you scum! You with your head in a noose, a spy that has failed in his mission, a miserable wretch that I can send to his death with a flip of my little finger! You impudent hound! Well, you'll get your deserts this time Captain Desmond Okewood * * * but I'll have that paper first!"

Roaring "Give it to me!" he rushed at me like some frenzied beast of the jungle. The veins stood out at his temples, his hairy nostrils opened and closed as his breath came faster, his long arms shot out and his great paws clutched at my throat.

But I was waiting for him. As he came at me I heard his clubfoot stump once on the polished floor, then, from the radiator behind me I raised high in my arms the heavy marble slab, and with every ounce of strength in my body brought it crashing down on his head.

He fell like a log, the blood oozing sluggishly from his head on to the parquet. I stopped an instant, snatched the cigar-case from the pocket where he had placed it, extracted the document and fled from the room.

CHAPTER XI.

Miss Mary Prendergast Risks Her Reputation.

The rooms of our suite were intercommunicating so that you could pass from one to the other without going into the corridor at all. Schmalz had retired this way, going from my room through the bathroom to his own room. In the excitement of the moment I forgot all about this, else I should not have omitted such an elementary precaution as slipping the bolt of the door communicating between my room and the bathroom.

As I stepped out into the corridor, with the crash of that heavy body still ringing in my ears, I thought I caught the sound of a light step in the bathroom; the next moment I heard a door open and then a loud exclamation of horror in the room I had just left.

The corridor was dim and deserted. The place seemed uninhabited. No boots stood outside the rooms, and open doors, one after the other, were sufficient indication that the apartments they led to were untenanted.

I didn't pause to reason or to plan. On hearing that long drawn out cry of horror, I dashed blindly down the corridor at top speed, followed it round to the right, and then, catching sight of a small staircase, rushed up it three steps at a time. As I reached the top I heard a loud cry somewhere on the floor below. Then a door banged, there was the sound of running feet and * * * silence.

I found myself on the next floor in a corridor similar to the one I had just left. Like it, it was desolate and dimly lit. Like it, it showed room after room silent and empty. Agitated as I was, the contrast with the bright and busy vestibule and the throng of uniformed servants below was so marked that it struck me with convincing force. Even the hotels, it seemed, were part and parcel of the great German publicity bluff which I had noted in my reading of the German papers at Rotterdam.

I had no plan in my head, only a wild desire to put as much distance as possible between me and that ape-room in the room below. So, after pausing a moment to listen and draw breath, I started off again. Suddenly a door down the corridor, not ten paces away from me, opened and a woman came out.

I stopped dead in my headlong course, but it was too late, and I found myself confronting her.

She was young and very beautiful with masses of thick brown hair clustering round a very white forehead. She was in evening dress, all in white, with an ermine wrap.

Even as I looked at her I knew her and she knew me.

"Monica," I whispered.

"Why! Desmond!" she said.

A regular hubbub echoed from below. Voices were crying out, doors were banging, there was the sound of feet.

The girl was speaking, saying in her low and pleasant voice phrases that were vague to me about her surprise, her delight at seeing me. But I did not listen to her. I was straining my ears toward that volume of chaotic noises which came swelling up from below.

"Monica!" I interrupted swiftly, "have you any place to hide me? This place is dangerous for me. * * * I must get away. If you can't save me, don't stay here, but get away yourself as fast as you can. They're after me, and if they catch you with me it will be bad for you!"

Without a word the girl turned round to the room she had just left. She beckoned to me, then knocked and went in. I followed her. It was a big, pleasant bedroom, elegantly furnished with soft carpet and silk hangings, and I know not what, with shaded lights and flowers in profusion. Sitting up in bed was a stout, placid-looking woman in a pink silk kimono with her hair coquettishly braided in two short pigtails which hung down on either side of her face.

Monica closed the door softly behind her.

"Why, Monica!" she exclaimed in horror—and her speech was that of the United States—"what on earth * * *"

"Not a word, Mary, but let me explain. * * *"

"But for land's sake, Monica * * *"

"Mary, I want you to help. * * *"

"But say, child, a man * * * in my bedroom * * * at this time o' night. * * *"

"Oh, shucks, Mary! let me talk."

The distress of the woman in bed was so comic that I could scarcely help laughing. She had dragged the bedclothes up till only her eyes could be seen. Her pigtails bobbed about in her emotion.

"Now, Mary dear, listen here. You're a friend of mine. This is Desmond Okewood, another, a very old and dear friend of mine, too. Well, you know, Mary, this isn't a healthy country these times for an English officer. That's what Desmond here is. I didn't know he was in Germany. I don't know a thing about him except what he's told me, and that he's in danger and wants me to help him.

"I met him outside and brought him right in here, as I know you would want me to, wouldn't you, dear?"

The lady poked her nose over the top of the bed clothes.

"Present the gentleman properly, Monica!" she said severely.

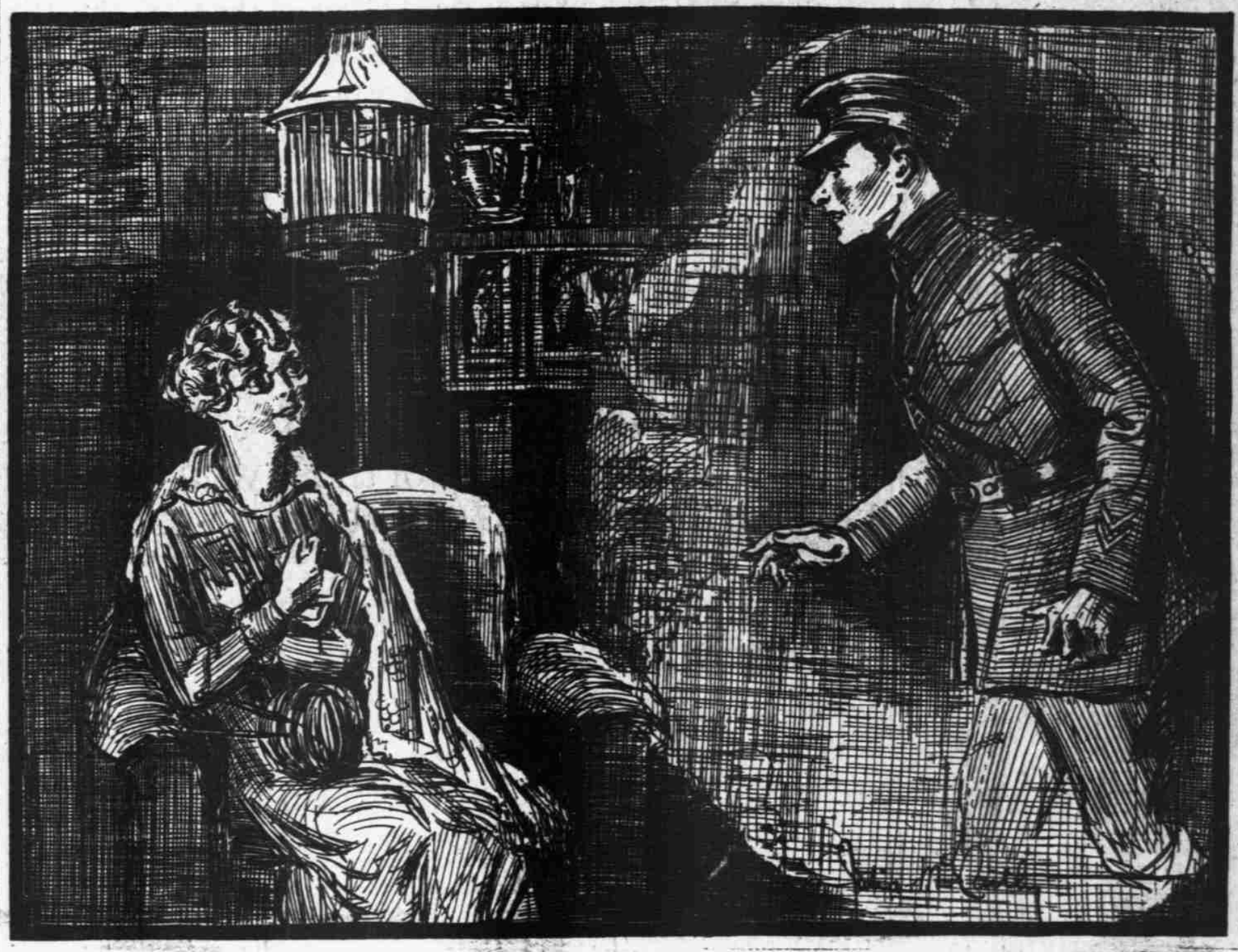
"Captain Okewood * * * Miss Mary Prendergast," said Monica.

The lady's head, pigtails and all, now appeared. She appeared to be somewhat mollified.

(TO BE CONTINUED TOMORROW)

His Mother's New Year's Dream Comes True

By Julia McCarthy



Puss in Boots Jr.

By David Cory.

NOW let me see. In the last story Puss had spent Christmas at a little farmhouse. Well, the next morning he said good-by and went upon his way, and by and by, after a while, he came to a town called Queerville. It was in New Mother Goose Land, and as it was now almost evening an old woman was going up on a rocket. Perhaps she meant to light the stars! Well, just then a farmer came along and said to Puss:

"Come with me, for it is getting near supper time. You are a traveler, I see. My good wife and I will be glad to have you spend the night with us." So our little hero accepted the invitation, and after supper he went out for a walk with the farmer, and when they came to the village, Puss saw something very, very strange. He was curious about it, so the farmer said:

"There is a man in our town
And he is wondrous bright.
They use him for a lamppost
To light the streets at night

"'Tis very strange when he is out
He always is most bright—
So very, very different from
The usual kind of light."

"Well, I should say so!" exclaimed Puss, and then he began to laugh, for it certainly was funny to see that man standing on the street corner shining away just like a big electric light in front of a moving picture show.

"I once knew a queer man; he lived in Bramble Bush Town," said Puss Junior.

"Oh, you mean the fellow who scratched out both his eyes and then scratched them in again?" said the farmer.

"Yes, he jumped into a bramble bush," said Puss with a grin.

"Well, this man you see like a statue of liberty," laughed the farmer—and he shouldn't have been such an awful old farmer after all, if he had been to New York and seen the Statue of Liberty enlightening the world—"is first cousin to the Bramble-Bush Man. Didn't I tell you this place was full of queer people?"

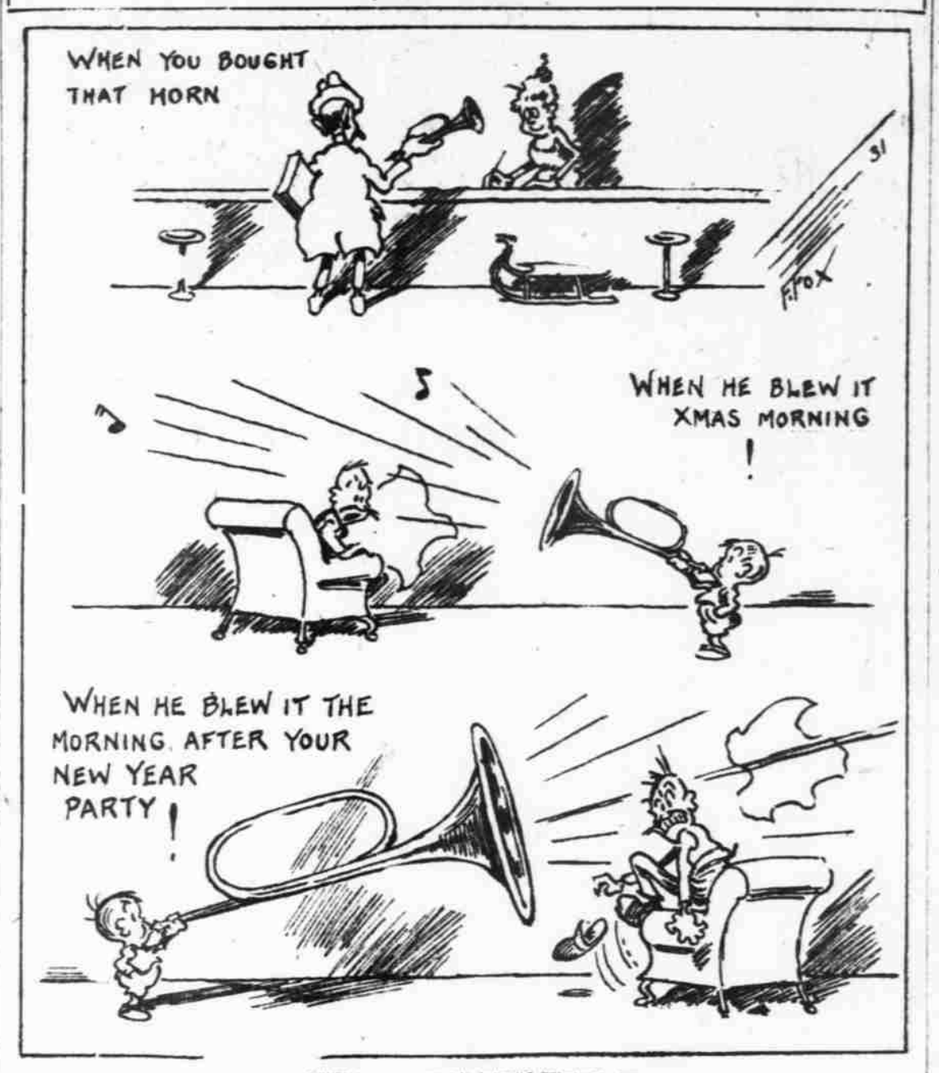
"Well, I've seen lots of things I never dreamed of in Old Mother Goose Land, but since I've been traveling in this country things seem just as strange. In fact, this lamp-post man is about as queer a person as I ever saw."

Then suddenly up in the sky, they saw the Old Woman on her rocket. And, oh, dear me! What a lot of shooting stars there were! If it had been the Fourth of July it couldn't have been any better. There were pink and green, blue and yellow, and every kind of colored stars, till Puss exclaimed "Let's go to bed, for my eyes are very tired!" And in the next story I'll tell you what he does when he wakes up.

(To Be Continued.)

HOW IT SEEMED

By FONTAINE FOX



Household Suggestions

Before applying black lead as a polish, make a pad of old cloth and rub soot from the back of the grate or from the flue on all the greasy parts. The grate will then take the polish and with much less labor than usual.

To preserve oilcloth, first wash it with warm water, using no soap, and when dry rub over with a cloth dipped in sweet milk, then polish in the usual way. Oilcloth treated in this way is beautifully fresh and clean.

A dainty lavender sachet can be very simply made by procuring a piece of muslin, five inches square, folding it corner to corner, filling it with dried lavender, and finishing off with a lace frill.

To clean bronze, make the article very hot by placing it in boiling water, then clean it well with a piece of flannel dipped in soapsuds, and rub it dry with a chamois leather.

To clean white kid gloves, mix a little oatmeal and benzine to a paste. Rub on the gloves until it is quite dry and the oatmeal falls off in flakes. Do not use the benzine in a room containing artificial light or an open fire.

Advice to the Lovelorn

By BEATRICE FAIRFAX.

Is He Sincere?

DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:

I am almost nineteen and have been going about with a sailor for the past few months. During a week that I was away, he wrote me frequently, his letters being very sentimental. He comes to the house and has met my family. He told me he loved me and made all manner of promises. I really love him and do not want to lose him, but I doubt his sincerity. About four weeks ago he broke an appointment with me, but was sorry and said this was due to his navy duties. I forgave him, but it happened again. I also disappointed him the last time he came to see me, but told him the reason, which was a good one. But I have not heard from him since. Now, Miss Fairfax, do you think it advisable to give him up, or wait and hope?

L. M. N.

If the young sailor falls into the way of being negligent and indifferent, I should say that you will have no choice but to give him up. But if he has a good explanation for his lapses, perhaps you are doing him an injustice. If you have a really frank talk with him, won't that help to determine the question of his sincerity? You have, of course, been friends too short a time to understand each other well.

Unhappy Family Situation.

DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:

I am nineteen, but appear to be a man of over twenty-one. In business I made several friends, one young lady in particular, who is two years my senior. We live but a few doors from each other and our friendship became such that we are together more than we are parted.

My mother abused me for this friendship and when the girl found out what had happened, she just had to weep.

Though I have made many friends, I am not allowed to go anywhere. Almost all my evenings are spent either in business or at home.

How can I help myself, besides talking nicely and trying to explain my honest convictions? H. J. S.

If you are self-supporting it might be just as well, since you are man-grown, for you to find lodging outside your own home, for a while at least. But if you are dependent on your parents you will doubtless have to continue to make concessions to them. It is of course extremely painful, since you are a young man of high principles, for your mother to misinterpret a friendship of yours, but since the young lady herself is not alienated, that is really the important thing, isn't it? And sometimes a friendship maintained under difficulties is stronger for that very reason.

His Better Nature.

"What are you crying about, little boy?" said the benevolent old gentleman to the weeping infant whom he saw in the street.

"Because I'm so mean an' selfish!" sobbed the little chap.

"Oh, you are not mean and selfish, surely, if it affects you like this! What makes you think so?"

"See this bread and jam? Well, I'm so mean an' selfish I ain't a-goin' to give Willie none of it. Boo-hoo-hoo!"

When a Girl Marries

Neal Confesses He Left Home to Escape Being Drafted

By Ann Lisle.

CHAPTER LXV.

NO one appeared to notice that Virginia and I parted without a word. I congratulated myself on the fact that every one probably thought we had said an affectionate farewell when we were alone in the bedroom.

Ruefully I reflected on the real situation. Virginia's last words to me had been:

"Your husband happens to be my brother—kindly remember that. I did what I thought best for him. But that didn't include lying to him."

After calling on Betty and Terry to find work for my Jim, Virginia had turned on me with actual fury for the way I helped carry out their plans. And she had snubbed Neal and called him an outsider. An outsider! Hadn't she always treated me as if I were one? As I turned these things over in my mind there was something very like hate for Virginia in my heart. And her actions had not indicated much love for me.

I was so preoccupied with this ugly situation that I began making preparations for dinner in complete silence. But Jim didn't appear to notice this. He had brought out his books on accounting and was working away with complete single-heartedness of purpose—to master that difficult study at one sitting.

Now and then, as I came into the living room with something for the dinner table, I heard him fling a question at Neal, who was standing idly at one of the windows playing with the apricot silk curtains. Now this hurt my housewifely feelings, but I realized that Neal was still sore from the rebuff Virginia had given him and that he would be frightfully hurt by even the slightest correction.

Presently Neal followed me into the kitchen.

"Anything I can do, Babbie?" he asked, with an entire lack of attraction that was no older than his question. Generally he plunged in and helped without any direction from me.

"Don't bother if you're tired, dear. I've nothing much to get—I saved a few sandwiches for you, and the rest of the dinner's just chops and carrots and baked potatoes."

A Word From Father.

"I'd like something to do. I—I don't want to think, Babbie," persisted Neal—then, suddenly, "Say, Babbie, have you heard from father lately?"

"That's funny, Neal—I was going to ask you about that. I've written twice a week as usual ever since you came, but I've had only a couple of postals from Father Andrew. I thought it was because he was writing to you."

"I've had exactly one letter from father since I came." Neal replied, in a voice that was almost husky.

"One letter? And you've been here over three weeks—almost a month. What does it mean, Neal?" I cried in amazement, slamming the door of the broiling oven on my chops and turning to face him.

There was a flash of defiance in his eyes as he responded:

"I guess he's been wishing he was your father—instead of mine," Neal said bitterly.

I went over and laid my hand on his shoulder.

"Neal—is there something you want to tell Babbie?"

"I'll keep my affairs to myself," replied Neal, shaking off my hand and muttering with a boyish gruffness I might have known masked actual emotion. "I—I only get hurt when I talk about what really matters. No one believes in me. And maybe they're right not to. But I might be different if they did. You think I'm as fickle as the deuce, and that Dalton woman thinks I'm not to be trusted at all, and Jim——"

Truth Must Out.

He stopped abruptly. His voice had risen high and tense—it broke on a high note.

"Yes, Neal?" asked Jim's voice. He had hobbled across the living-room and stood in the doorway of the kitchenette. His face was stern and set. His voice had a ring of authority.

"You were saying that no one trusted you. No, Neal, you needn't look so indignant—I wasn't eavesdropping. When I heard you shout that no one believed in you, I hurried out here as fast as my—ankle would permit. So you think I don't trust you?"

"How can you trust me—knowing what you do?" Neal tried to hold his voice steady, but in spite of him, a broken note crept into it. "You've stood by—and tried to help me. But what must you think of me—you with that smashed foot you got in the fight I—I——"

Then he turned to me and flung his young head high as he choked out the confession it must have tortured him to make. And, strangely enough—instead of wavering away—Neal's eyes held mine as he muttered, huskily:

"I'm a slacker, Babbsie. A draft-dodger. I ran away from home to get out of being a soldier—to get away from the draft."

(To be Continued.)

In Festive Mood.

An English lad went to visit his Scottish cousins during his summer holidays, and his breakfast every morning consisted of plain oatmeal until he became thoroughly tired of it. One morning, when he felt that he could endure it no longer, he said, "I say, Freddy, don't you ever have any milk with your porridge?" Freddy turned to his brother and grinned. "Eh, James," he said, "the lad thinks it's Christmas!"